

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, May 13, 1993

Published Since 1877

"Church" status doesn't remove government obligations

By Paul G. Jones II

Many church leaders believe that the U.S. Constitution grants the church and other religious bodies freedom from compliance with the laws, rules, and regulations with which private business must comply.

There are, however, several obligations a church must face as a part of its legal existence.

Sales & Use Taxes

The sales tax laws of Mississippi do not provide an exemption for a church or other religious body. Any purchase by a church is subject to applicable sales tax, and there is no exception provided for the religious literature purchased within the state.

Churches are also subject to "use taxes," which are a type of sales tax applied to goods purchased outside the state for "use" within the state. The rate is the same as sales tax on applicable items.

Churches are exempted under law from paying use tax only on the purchase of religious literature, videotapes, and photographic slides. It is a criminal act to purchase goods out of state and avoid payment of tax.

Last year, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Quill Corporation vs. North Dakota* held that a state cannot impose responsibility for use tax collections on an out-of-state seller that conducts no activity in the state other than the solicitation of orders. The *Quill* decision seems to enhance state law that makes the in-state purchaser responsible for the payment of any use taxes.

Social Security & withholding taxes

The church as an employer is responsible for meeting the requirements regarding the reporting of social security and salary information. An ordained minister is treated as "self-employed" for income tax and social security purposes. The church cannot withhold these taxes as a means of reducing tax liability of an ordained staff member.

Unordained staff members are treated as any other employee, with the church withholding the applicable social security portion and designated federal, state, and local (if any) income taxes.

Unexempted tax liability

The 501(c)(3) tax exempt status of a church does not totally remove liability from certain federal taxes, such as federal excise tax and tax on unrelated business income. Since 1950, businesses have been liable for taxes on unrelated business income.

Unrelated business income is defined as gross income from any unrelated trade or business that is regularly carried on and which normally is "not substantially related" to exempt church functions.

To be related, the activity should "contribute importantly" to the accomplishment of the exempt purposes, other than providing funds.

Immigration

Every church is required to have an Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) I-9 form completed on every person paid a salary on or after Nov. 6, 1986. The form documents proof of citizenship or alien status, and requires an examination of the primary documents by a representative of the church. There is no exception for amount of employment or age of employee, and the INS spot-checks employers.

Purchasing policies

A church can often be held liable for debts incurred by a responsible member who may be acting in a capacity approved by the church. For example, a properly elected member of a transportation committee could be seen as representing the committee in approving repairs or parts for vehicles owned by the church.

The church can best protect itself by establishing written policies limiting the persons who can purchase on behalf of the church, and by providing a system of prior approval, authorization, and documentation for all expenditures.

A church should regularly review its by-laws to be sure that the by-laws are not contrary to non-profit corporation laws, and that the by-laws are expressive of what the

church wishes to state as its rules and procedures. The by-laws should be thorough, complete, and an accurate expression of the church's desires.

Disabilities

Another concern for churches is compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA exempts churches from meeting the public accommodations section of the act. That is, a church is exempt from having to make their public facilities physically accessible to the disabled.

Thus, while it may be advantageous and ethically responsible to remove physical barriers to participation in church activities, churches are not required by the ADA to accommodate the public.

However, beginning in July 1992, churches are required to make "reasonable accommodations" for disabled employees if the church employs more than a certain number of people. A church must comply if it has 25 or more workers for 20 or more weeks a year, between July 29, 1992 and July 29, 1994. Beginning on July 29, 1994, a church must comply if it employs 15 or more persons for 20 or more weeks a year.

The ethical issue may be the most crucial for the witness of the church. Steve Jessen, executive director of the Christian League for the Handicapped, stated, "It will be an embarrassing indictment when 10 years from now the only building a disabled person cannot get into in this country is a church."

Zoning

Many churches are facing new challenges from municipal and county governments that are changing zoning regulations and procedures. The expansion or construction of a facility may confront a church with ordinances requiring additional parking or expanded fire and safety provisions.

Zoning has historically been used to protect

different classes of property from encroachment by undesired types of construction. Many churches built outside the boundaries of a municipality may now find themselves annexed into a municipality and thus under the zoning laws of the city.

If a church is in a commercial or industrial area, the protection from encroachment by undesired enterprises may be greatly reduced. Sale of alcoholic beverages and other morally unacceptable behavior and products may be allowed undesirably close to a church in certain zoned areas.

Furthermore, churches in defined historic districts may find it virtually impossible to alter or improve facilities, due to very restrictive laws governing property in the area. Since the 1990 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Employment Division vs. Smith*, decisions by local governments to restrict the activities of churches in certain areas have been upheld by courts in most jurisdictions.

Ownership

Finally, a church should confirm that ownership of property is correctly listed in the legal documents of the state and its subdivisions. A licensed realtor or real estate attorney can examine deeds of ownership and titles to assure that the property is correctly recorded.

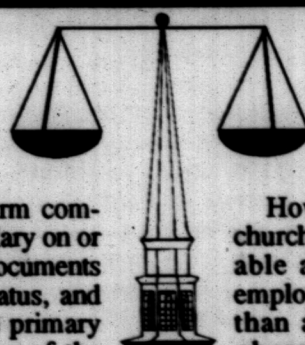
Several churches have discovered that some or all of its property was recorded in the names of individuals or groups other than the church. Recently, a church discovered that one of its buildings was built on land not owned by the church.

Churches desiring additional legal information should contact a local attorney, certified public accountant, or realtor for specific information.

Materials on these issues can be obtained from the Christian Action Commission (CAC) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention by writing to CAC, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, Miss., 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800.

Jones is executive director, Christian Action Commission, MBC.

Church and State



Part 2
of a series

Easter '93

HUNTSVILLE SOUTH, Australia (EP) — An event called "Easter '93" brought together Australian Christians to worship and celebrate the Resurrection in unity. Around the country, Christians joined together to march and proclaim the risen Lord.

Organizers at each site told of new awareness in the communities about the meaning of Easter, as onlookers saw Christians worshipping and celebrating together.

The program commenced with gatherings at various points in the communities. Groups marched in three directions and converged on a central location where a human cross was formed.

Easter '93 was the fourth annual event and attracted overseas interest. Plans are underway for "Easter '94" celebrations in South Africa, Fiji, and Boston. Next year's event will lead into 12 weeks of outreach, culminating in the international "March for Jesus."

Albania churches

TIRANA, Albania (EP) — The sudden growth of at least 40 evangelical churches in Albania follows 25 years of an absolute ban on religion. An alliance of 30 mission groups under the name Evangelical Brotherhood may be the starting point for a national evangelical fellowship in this country of 3.4 million people.

An easy-to-read Bible in the Albanian language was scheduled for publication by the European Christian Mission in April, according to World Evangelical Report. Although New Testaments are estimated to be in the hands of at least 500,000 Albanians, this will be the first complete Bible in the national language.

Churches are threatened, however, by a law that may severely limit freedom of worship. An earlier proposal, since rejected, suggested the creation of four government-designated "historical" religions, not including Protestants. A new law on religion is pending.

Briefly...

Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR (EP) — Unpublished census figures indicate that Christianity is on the rise in Malaysia. Of 17,500,000 people, 8% claim to be Christian, up from 6.5% in 1980. Hinduism, Confucianism, and Taoism declined during the same period, but Islam rose significantly from 53% to 60% of the population.

China

BEIJING (EP) — Bishop Ding Gungxun, 77, has stepped down from China's top legislative body amid speculation he is being punished for criticism of government interference in legal religious activity.

England

LONDON (EP) — Representatives of gospel recording ministries from more than 20 countries have formed what they call Global Recordings Network. The aim of the group is to ensure the effective communication of the gospel to unreached and non-literate peoples using recorded messages in their own languages.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

The megachurch and the SBC

"Millions are served, but are they being fed?" Christianity Today calls it "McChurch, offering to the hungry churchgoer a menu of 'Feelgood Fillet, Happy Homily, Bible Lite, and Where's the Beef' with a 'Have it Thy Way' slogan." This generalization is about as accurate as most generalizations. Are we becoming a retail outlet for faith, with a discount philosophy and a consumer mentality?

Best-selling books zero in on self-esteem, self-fulfillment, and self-analysis, while books on self-sacrifice gather dust in the bargain basement. Doctrines and missions are on hold as we grapple with happy hour and fellowship. Chuck Colson maintains that the church is having an identity crisis as we equate success with size. This explains why "church growth" is the mushrooming department of agencies and schools. They talk more about parking lots and nurseries than sanctification and heaven.

The "feel good, be happy, customer is king" outlook of some churches has produced rapid growth. This fascinates us on paper, but some of the megachurches are reaching people the "church as usual" could never reach.

Willow Creek Church near Chicago offers a balance of music, drama, and fanfare plus a solid spiritual message. Paul Younghi Cho's Gospel Church in Seoul, Korea, with upwards of 500,000 members, has a record of gospel outreach. Hundreds of American churches now plan for 3,000 to 15,000 worshippers every Sunday.

What accounts for such churches? Is it a strong, dominant personality,

or a "meet your every need" approach? Entertainment or infotainment? Keying electronics with a fast-paced religion, or is it the heart-hunger of the boomers/consumers for something real? Is it a combination of characteristics of today's society, or is it God?

The "community" must enter into the ministry of any church, including the megachurch. Community is the "one body" idea and is supportive in its function. It's working together as a whole; meeting the needs of one another. It may have geographical boundaries, more often it does not. A church may minister to a blue collar community that spreads for miles in all directions, or a professional community, or a boomer/consumer area.

Churches grow. You can't say to them, "Please stop growing." Sheep have a tendency to go where they are fed. The megachurch may draw the youths out of a small church, the professionals from another.

One writer suggested the megachurch is responsible for much of the SBC controversy. This generation is obsessed with bigger being better. Tom Raabe, in *The Ultimate Church*, sings to the tune of "Hark, the Herald Angels:"

Numbers, numbers is our cry
Charts and graphs and formulae
Stats and surveys, lots to do
Facts and figures, growth rate too

Bigger signs and parking lots,
We want people just like us
Strictly homogeneous
Hark! What do the numbers say?

Big is better, all the way."
Instead of a church with 10,000 in

attendance, many would opt for 20 churches with 500 each. Mobility and the bigness obsession dash this desire against the wall as they keep looking for a closer parking lot. Is the only choice to provide it or some megachurch will?

It appears unlikely that Southern Baptists will "go megachurch." We have roughly 38,000 churches. Twenty percent of churches have less than 99 members; 23% have less than 199 members; 27% have less than 399; 21% have less than 749; 9% have less than 1,499 members; 3% have less than 2,999; and only 0.8% of churches with more than 3,000 members. However, the 0.8% churches have over 10% of the members. We have about 98% of our churches which hardly qualify as a megachurch. Ken Hemphill, in the *Bonsai Theory of Church Growth*, says that "church growth is natural and artificial measures must be taken to keep a church from growing."

Yet even a small church can have a megachurch mentality that fore-shadows the possibility of unethical methods in trying to imitate the super church. In *Life Cycle of a New Congregation*, Floyd Tidsworth says, "Any size church is a good size if it reaches people for Christ and carries out the Great Commission."

Religion and church participation are popular now. Churches are taking advantage of this popularity and some are injecting a Christian element into their communities. The plea is for churches to offer a solid biblical growth without sacrificing truth for popularity.

CONFERENCE

Thursday, January 12th

"HOW TO BREAK THE
200,000 - 300,000 BARRIER"

"After attending your last seminar, I went out and quadrupled our Sunday School in two weeks. Thanks for remembering us pastors out here in the boonies." — HAMMOND, INDIANA
"Finally someone has come up with an answer to a problem stymying our little church." — DALLAS

Our "beloved" parliamentarian

Is a note of commendation in order for the able parliamentarian C. Barry McCarty for his faithfulness in attending the SBC for the years of the controversy? He stands before us as a symbol of our inability to rule over ourselves. We have not ordained the bramble to rule over us but the thought is bound to be there. Though we have many graduates of Roberts Rule of Order in the SBC, none has the great Church of Christ background as Mr. McCarty.

Also, we would not feel comfortable in asking fellow Baptists to accept the \$1,000 per day salary being paid Bro. McCarty. Baptist messengers include lawyers,

judges, convenors, conference leaders, 37 state convention presidents, and dare we mention some women, who preside with grace and charm. However, not a one can measure up to Bro. Barry. Year after year he shadows the background as a divisive token of the distrust among us. Standing just behind the podium he is in most every picture and is on television more than Perry Mason.

In addition, he has listened to the same type speeches, endured the same controversy, and endorsed the same decisions for 10, these many years. Come to think of it, are we really paying him enough? — GH

Guest Opinion...

Finding a way to reinvent the SBC

By Russell H. Dilday

Part 2

It demands the cooperation of Baptists, but the task of reinventing the Southern Baptist Convention is not an impossible one.

The SBC, after all, is an "invention" — created by cooperating Baptists in another century. Stirred by profound biblical faith, they decided their churches should voluntarily cooperate in order to obey their Lord's commission. This concept was distinctive and bold, and over the past century, it has put the convention in the vanguard of evangelistic, missionary denominations.

But the denominational problems of these last dozen years have diminished the SBC dream for some. A faltering uncertainty has

replaced the surefootedness of earlier years, and our convention seems stalled in a denominational vacuum.

So it's time to reinvent the SBC. Southern Baptists should not give up on the convention. Today's problems, although real and large, are not immutable. The possibility of a re-shaped, New Southern Baptist Convention (NSBC) is intriguing and hopeful.

It seems to me, the NSBC should be crafted by persons from within the tradition, from the authentic, not by those who have given up on the convention nor by those on the periphery whose understanding of the SBC may be distorted and inaccurate.

What would be the shape of this reinvented convention? Let me

suggest some features of the NSBC:

1. The NSBC should preserve the denominational solidarity of the past, but should be less afraid of responsible trans-denominational networks and coalitions.

Now the time is right for Southern Baptists to broaden the cooperation which is so characteristic of our internal relationships and include in our cooperation a larger segment of like-minded believers in other groups, particularly in the evangelical world. Without diluting our denominational distinctives, or leaping carelessly into ecumenical alliances, we can find ways to work together and draw strength from our evangelical "cousins."

The NSBC should jealously

maintain its denominational solidarity while it turns away from un-Christlike pride, smug exclusivism, and the unlovely triumphalism so prevalent in the past.

2. The NSBC should refuse to use politics, power, and pressure tactics and adopt instead weapons such as persuasion and proclamation in its service for Christ.

The book *Power Religion* by J.I. Packer warns evangelical conservatives of the dangers of political entanglements which tend to reduce the church of the Lord Jesus Christ to little more than another political special interest group. The book's message is timely for Southern Baptists as they consider a reshaped convention for the next century.

In 1984, the SBC annual sermon warned Southern Baptists to turn from the "muddy swamps of political coercion to the higher ground of spiritual persuasion." Jesus

made it unmistakably clear by his commands and example that the power we are to employ in our work for him is not political or conscriptive, but spiritual power. Our Savior wept over Jerusalem, but he never besieged it, never rallied its legislature or courts to favor his cause, never formed a political coalition to advance his kingdom. He preached, prayed, served, loved, and, even at the sacrificial cost of his life, steadfastly rejected worldly force.

Baptists in the future need to imitate their Lord who even though he could wither a fig tree at 50 paces with a spoken rebuke, and with one word de-fang a howling windstorm into a whimpering breeze, refused to force his will on others. The NSBC should adopt the biblical model and be content with spiritual weapons.

Dilday is president, Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

The Baptist Record

VOLUME 117

(ISSN-0005-5778)

NUMBER 14

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$7.35 a year payable in advance. Second class postage paid at Jackson, Mississippi. The Baptist Record is a member of Southern Baptist Press Association.

Editor.....Guy Henderson
Associate Editor.....William H. Perkins Jr.
Advertising/News writer.....Teresa Dickens
Editorial Associate.....Florence Larrimore
Circulation Manager.....Renee Walley
Bookkeeper.....Betty Anne Bailey
Layout/News writer.....Shannon Simpson
Editor Emeritus.....Don McGregor

Baptist Record Advisory Committee: Deborah Brunt, Corinth; Susan Kinton, Walnut Grove; Randy Turner, Laurel; Horace Kerr, Brandon; Grady Collins, Philadelphia; Teresa Dickens, secretary.
Postmaster: Send changes of address to The BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.

Send news, communication, and address changes to The Editor, Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205 (601) 968-3800

"Spectaculars," Chuck Swindoll among SBC highlights in Houston

By Art Toalston

HOUSTON (BP) — Full-scale presentations of music, drama, and testimony are taking shape for the Tuesday and Wednesday evenings of the June 15-17 Southern Baptist Convention.

And popular author Charles R. "Chuck" Swindoll has been confirmed to address the SBC's closing session Thursday.

Both evening programs will feature the combined choirs and orchestras of two of Houston's leading churches, Second Church, where SBC President H. Edwin Young is pastor, and First Church.

The Tuesday evening highlight will focus on the Baptist Sunday School Board and the variety and scope of its ministries, with the theme, "For Such a Time as This: The Bible Speaks."

The Wednesday evening spectacular will focus on the national and international work of the SBC's Home and Foreign Mission boards, with the theme, "For Such a Time as This: The Walls Crumble."

In addition to the combined church choirs, both evenings will feature drama — including actor Dean Jones on Tuesday night — as well as music — including country music performer Ricky Skaggs also on Tuesday — and video/multi-media segments.

Gary Moore, one of the Houston coordinators, said the programs will entail at least \$750,000 worth of investment each night in voluntary contributions of time by musicians, drama groups, artists, engineers, and choirs and in props

from Houston-area churches.

BSSB President Jimmy Draper said the board's expense will be "less than \$100,000 but worth much more in the exposure to Southern Baptists of the materials produced by the BSSB. It will be well worth the expense."

The HMB is prepared to spend \$15,000 to \$30,000 for its share of the Wednesday evening costs, Martin King, HMB public relations director, said, but no exact amount will be determined until organizers have finished exploring possible cost-saving measures. The board previously has spent \$10,000 to \$12,000 on its convention reports in arranging for home missionaries to be on hand and in producing various video segments, King added.

Don Sewell of the FMB public affairs office, said the FMB is prepared to spend up to \$25,000 for its Wednesday evening share. He said the board has spent \$7,000 to \$8,000 on its reports the last few years and as much as \$14,000 one previous year.

The Sunday School Board spectacular, Moore said, will be in parable form linking Moses, played by Dean Jones, and how he brought God's message to the people of Israel, with how the BSSB is bringing God's Word to people today.

Also featured in the program, will be Christian musicians Cynthia Clawson and Wayne Watson, and dramatist Ragan Courtney.

Toalston writes for Baptist Press.

Pre-SBC Crossover events will address Houston's "vast lostness"

HOUSTON (BP) — Indianapolis and Houston are "incredibly different" cities, says Alvin Reid, but the need to

share the gospel is the same.

As director of evangelism for the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, Reid was a leader in

Houston SBC meeting forecast: 23,500-25,000

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptists will return to Houston for an annual convention meeting for the first time since 1979 with as many as 25,000 messengers expected June 15-17 at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

Lee Porter, SBC registration secretary, told Baptist Press he expects between 23,500 and 25,000 messengers to register for the 136th session. There were 17,956 registered for the convention's first-ever meeting in Indianapolis last year and 15,760 in Houston, in 1979, generally regarded as the start of the "conservative resurgence" and more than a decade of turbulence for the nation's largest evangelical

denomination.

An unknown is how much the "Masonic issue" will swell the registration figure, Porter said. The SBC Home Mission Board will bring a report and recommendation on Freemasonry membership in SBC churches that the matter primarily be decided by local churches and by individual church members. Although it is generally felt that the HMB's recommendation has diffused the issue, Porter said nobody knows for sure.

Messenger cards are available upon request from the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. For other registration information, call Porter at (904) 785-8596.

Crossover Indianapolis last year. The evangelistic thrust preceding the Southern Baptist Convention resulted in 1,043 professions of faith.

Reid has since moved to Houston where he is assistant professor of Christianity at Houston Baptist University.

"I don't think there is a city in the Bible Belt that is more innovative than Houston," Reid said. "The resources here are much greater (than in Indianapolis), but the lostness is just as vast."

A 1990 report on church membership shows 42% of Houston's Harris County residents are not affiliated with any of 133 religious groups. This year's Crossover activities will include door-to-door visitation, block parties, church rallies, and a prayer conference.

To be involved in Crossover, contact Bobby Sunderland, Home Mission Board evangelism assistant at (404) 898-7688 or 1350 Spring Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30367-5601.

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, May 13, 1993

Published Since 1877

FMB cuts 37 jobs, 8 percent of staff, in budget shortfall

By Bob Stanley

Richmond, Va. (BP) — Thirty-seven jobs, representing 8% of its 450 home office positions, are being cut by the Foreign Mission Board.

Most of the cutback will be in effect by June 1. A few people close to retirement are being allowed to work several more months until their planned retirement date.

The board's interim president, Don Kammerdiener, said a reduction in home office expenses was necessary because of "shortfalls in Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon giving as well as some decline in investment income caused by the decline in interest rates."

In a message sent overnight to mission board trustees, he said the cuts include support level, professional, and management positions. With the reductions, the board will be able to reduce its staff salary and benefits expenditures by "more than \$1 million annually," he wrote trustees.

Kammerdiener noted 10 of the positions being cut were vacant. The remaining 27 people, including 14 support staff and 13 professional or management staff mem-

bers, were notified May 5. For those losing their jobs, the board will provide full pay, continuing insurance, and pension participation for three to six months, depending on years of service. They also will be paid for unused leave time.

Of the board's \$183.8 million budget for 1993, 12.20%, or \$22.4 million, was allocated for state-side administrative and promotional expenses. Staff salaries and benefits make up \$15.5 million of the stateside total.

The interim president said the process of downsizing included individual conferences with each vice president or office director and study by the staff's top-level global strategy group, which reviewed each office's proposed cutbacks in detail during a May 3-4 meeting. "While we regret that this (staff reduction) is necessary, we have no choice but to move on with the reduction of some home office jobs," Kammerdiener said in his explanation to staff.

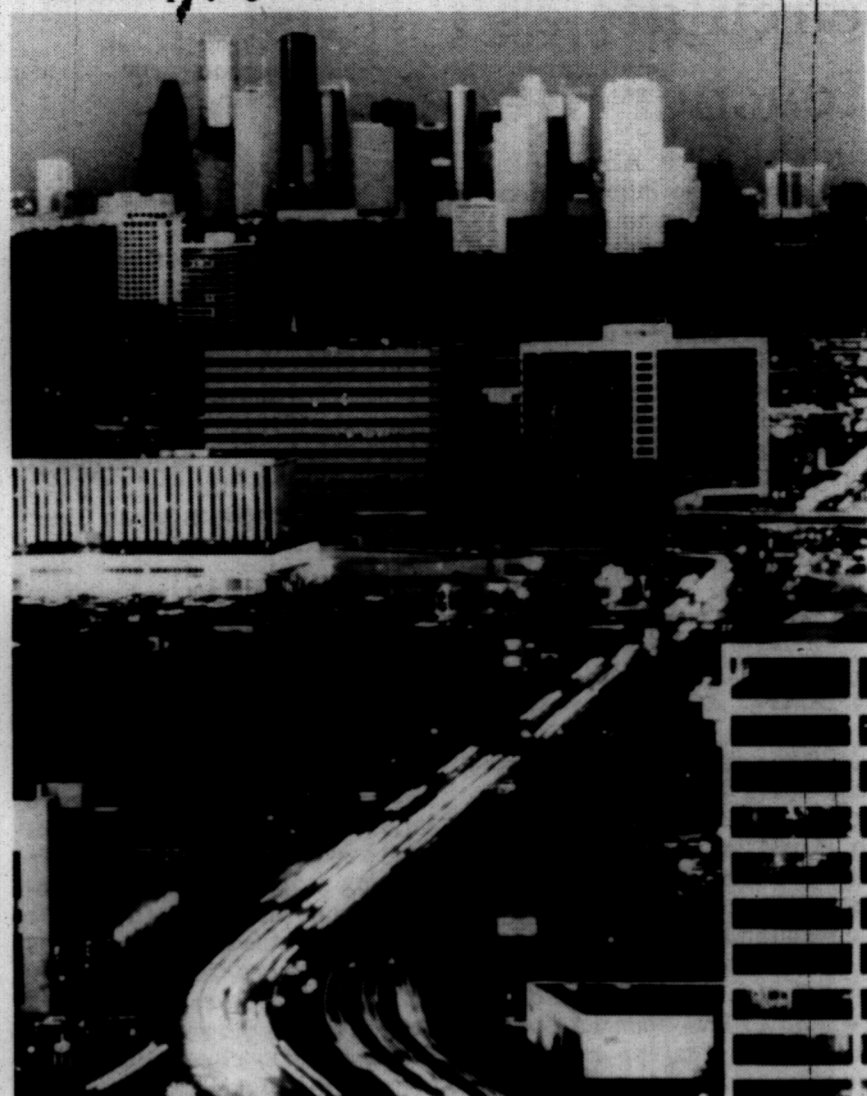
Further amplifying the staff cut-

backs, Bob Shoemaker, executive assistant to Kammerdiener, said, "Every office is impacted. Every office contributed significantly in personnel or programs to the overall downsizing."

"There are no plans to release the list (of individuals losing jobs)," he said, "because it is a personal matter with individuals involved."

Shoemaker said the downsizing included the loss of four computer programmers; dissolving the missionary enlistment department and placing its administrative staff in other existing FMB slots; eliminating the Baptists Living Abroad, Tentmaker, and CEO programs of missions opportunities for Baptist lay people living or travelling overseas; significant downsizing of the word processing unit, with technology allowing more work to be done in administrative offices; and one office consolidating its administrative structure to eliminate one level of supervision.

Stanley is director, News and Information Office, FMB.



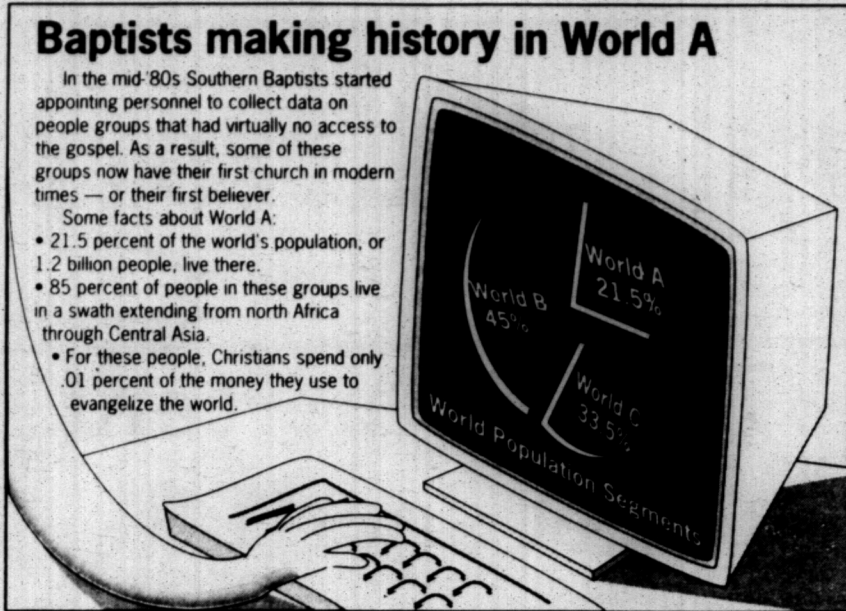
CONVENTION SITE — Houston, home of the largest Baptist association of local churches in the Southern Baptist Convention, will host the 1993 annual SBC meeting June 15-17 in the George R. Brown Convention Center.

Baptists making history in World A

In the mid-'80s Southern Baptists started appointing personnel to collect data on people groups that had virtually no access to the gospel. As a result, some of these groups now have their first church in modern times — or their first believer.

Some facts about World A:

- 21.5 percent of the world's population, or 1.2 billion people, live there.
- 85 percent of people in these groups live in a swath extending from north Africa through Central Asia.
- For these people, Christians spend only .01 percent of the money they use to evangelize the world.



(BP) GRAPHIC By Marty Croll

Longtime consultant Norman Rodgers retires

Norman Rodgers, adult consultant and associational work coordinator with the Discipleship Training and Family Ministries Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, retired April 30. He joined the staff Nov. 1, 1962.



Rodgers

Mose Dangerfield, director of that department, said, "Norman has been involved in Bible Drills all the years he was employed in the department. He was a Bible

Drill winner as a youth. Many of the boys and girls who have participated in Bible Drills will remember Mr. Rodgers' support and encouragement."

Rodgers has two grown children living in Nashville, Tenn., and three grandchildren. His wife, Jan, formerly with the Stewardship Department of the Convention Board, is employed by Jackson Tour and Travel Co. They will continue to live in Madison.

Robin Nichols is now family ministry and adult consultant. The department is seeking a consultant for youth discipleship training and recreation.

Allegations of impropriety circulate as Baptist teacher fired from job

NORTH POLE, Alaska (BP) — A trustee of the Foreign Mission Board is fighting to save his 17-year teaching career as allegations that he is improperly involved with students have rocked this small-town bedroom community outside Fairbanks.

Rumors of sexual misconduct started circulating in the absence of details after the trustee, Rodney G. Duncan, was suspended with pay March 15 from North Pole High School, where he

taught language arts in grades 9-12. He was fired April 7. Although police are investigating the highly publicized situation, no criminal charges have been filed.

"It's a witch-hunt," Duncan told Baptist Press. "It would be funny if it wasn't so serious." Duncan believes many of the school officials' objections to him relate to his living out a Christian witness as youth director of his church.

State gifts to Cooperative Program down 2 percent

Cooperative Program gifts from the 2,000 Mississippi Baptist churches totaled \$1,687,153 in April, according to Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Total income for 1993 is \$7,295,065, which is \$188,935 (or 2.52%) less than the operating budget for the first four months of the year. The 1993 total so far is also \$194,748 (or 2.60%) less than that received in

the first four months of 1992.

The 1993 Cooperative Program budget is \$22,452,000. This helps fund such items as the leadership training programs of the Convention Board, the Baptist Children's Village, and the three Mississippi Baptist colleges. A total of 37% of the budget goes to Southern Baptist causes outside the state.

The board is charged with distributing the funds according to a vote taken each year at the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

Applications increase for career, short-term service through FMB

By Mary E. Speidel

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Applications for career mission service through the Foreign Mission Board are up 7% from last year, and mission officials predict a similar increase in 1993 appointments.

At the same time, about 39% more people than this time last year have applied for short-term assignments through the board's International Service Corps. So far this year, applications approved for the service corps have increased by almost 26% compared to last year's total.

These statistics "show some very encouraging projections for what the rest of this year will hold" in career appointments and assignments through the service corps, said Thurmon Bryant, the board's interim vice president for mission personnel. Bryant assumed that responsibility April 26 after Harlan Spurgeon took early retirement, expressing dis-

agreement with trustee actions.

Career missions applications numbered almost 2,900 a year ago while current applications stand at more than 3,100, according to Lloyd Atkinson, director of the Personnel Selection Department. Based on that increase, Atkinson projects career missionary appointments for 1993 will total between 215 and 220, up from last year's 205 appointments.

Despite these increases, the total missionary force has not yet grown at the rate needed to achieve Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust goal of 5,000 missionaries overseas by the year 2000, according to an April report issued to trustees by the board's research and planning office. The mission force total includes career and associate missionaries and two-year workers.

The annual growth rate for the total foreign missionary force has averaged a little more than .3 of

1% since Southern Baptists adopted Bold Mission Thrust in 1976. An annual increase of 3.18% is needed to achieve the 5,000 goal, the report indicated.

Since 1991 the board has seen a steady increase in the percentage of two-year personnel in the total missionary force in relation to career personnel. Two-year personnel make up almost 12% of the current missionary count of 3,953. That's up from just over 10% at the end of 1992 and 9% at the end of 1991.

Another significant increase over the past few years is in numbers of seminary students who have contacted the board about career appointment, Atkinson said. "Some of these people may be several years away from appointment. But it does say that the pipeline of candidates is strong at this point," he said.

Speidel writes for Foreign Mission Board.

David Wilkinson becomes fourth Southern administrator to resign

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) — David Wilkinson has resigned after more than six years as vice president for seminary relations at Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Wilkinson is the fourth administrator to step down since March 26, when trustees elected Albert Mohler to succeed Roy Honeycutt as seminary president.

"This decision was made without regrets but with an overwhelming sense of grief. For me, Southern Seminary has consistently represented the best of what it means to be a Baptist Christian, and my prayer is that the seeds of this precious heritage will continue and find fertile ground in Baptist life."

In addition to Wilkinson's depar-

ture, Provost Larry McSwain is leaving to become president of Shorter College, Rome, Ga. Milburn Price, dean of the school of church music, will become chairman of the music department at Samford University, Birmingham, Ala. Bill Rogers, dean of the school of Christian education, will return to full-time teaching duties.

Wilkinson declined to link his

resignation directly to dissatisfaction with Mohler's election and subsequent turmoil at the seminary, but he added, "I think it's best for the nature and timing of my departure to speak for themselves."

Although he did not announce what he will do next, Wilkinson has been mentioned as a possibility to fill several vacant posts in Baptist life.

Committee weighed board nominees' Bible beliefs, commitment

NASHVILLE (BP) — Biblical beliefs and commitment to the Southern Baptist Convention were two key factors the Committee on Nominations used in selecting nominees to SBC boards and commissions, according to the chairman of the 70-member committee.

Joe Atchison, director of missions for the Northwest Association in Bentonville, Ark., told Baptist Press May 3 the committee "carried on in the tradition of (nominating) people who believe in an inerrant Bible."

"And we did not feel that those who support the Cooperative Bap-

tist Fellowship should serve on a board," Atchison said. The CBF is an organization of Baptists formed in 1991 in opposition to the conservative direction of the SBC.

Atchison also noted the Committee on Nominations sought to expand minority representation on the SBC boards.

A committee member from each state Baptist convention reviewed with the entire committee the background of each nominee from their state, as well as reasons the nominee was being recommended, Atchison recounted. Then time was allotted for questions from committee members.

Waggoner is new DOM for Attala

Bobby Waggoner, who presently serves as pastor of Liberty Church,



Waggoner

Flowood, has accepted the position as director of missions for Attala Association effective May 17. He succeeds Paul B. Williamson Jr., who has retired and now lives in Kosciusko. Waggoner and his wife, Brenda, have three children, Kim, Kyle, and Kerry. He is a graduate of Morton High School, William Carey College, and New Orleans Seminary.

Former HMB director dies

C.E. Autrey, former director of evangelism for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, died May 9. Funeral services were held in Pensacola, Fla., where he was living at the time of his death.

Autrey was born Sept. 17, 1904, in Columbia, Miss. In addition to his position at the Home Mission Board, he also served as a home missionary in Utah during the latter years of his life.

Gay rights march on Washington leaves deep division in its wake

By Tom Strode

WASHINGTON (BP) — While nearly a third of a million people marched for homosexual rights in Washington, they appeared to do nothing to erase the deep division over the volatile issue manifested during and after the event.

Some religious groups held services affirming the participants' homosexuality, while others lined the route and implored marchers to reject their lifestyle.

President Bill Clinton, a Southern Baptist, confirmed his support of the homosexuals' cause, while a Southern Baptist agency official criticized Clinton's "encouragement" of the homosexual rights movement.

"I stand with you in the struggle for equality for all Americans, including gay men and lesbians," the president said in a letter read to the crowd by Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

Meanwhile, James A. Smith of the Washington office of the Christian Life Commission said he was "disgusted and grieved that such a display of immorality and perversity could be so openly displayed in our nation's capital with the approval and encouragement of the president of the United States. What makes this even more troubling is that the president is only

too eager to identify himself as a Southern Baptist."

The march, however, was "a colossal failure," Smith said. "I'm genuinely surprised and delighted that the homosexual movement

the corner of 7th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.

Their "main success was in getting the word out to homosexuals that they do have a choice in their lifestyle," Transformation Executive Director Anthony

Falzarano said. "Some (tracts) were thrown back in our faces; we were spit upon, but... we were there for the lambs that were lost in that crowd."

"We felt there had to be some backslidden Christians who were not really happy about being in that Sodom and Gomorrah parade."

The seven published demands of the march included passage of a "lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender civil rights bill" and the right to "reproductive freedom and choice."

"The implications and repercussions of this event are enormous," the CLC's Smith said. "Public policy is not shaped in a vacuum. The truth of

this fact is demonstrated by how federal officials — the president on down — felt compelled by political alliances to identify with the march.

"Southern Baptists must also be engaged in the public policy process."

Strode is director of media & news information, Washington office, CLC.

SEATTLE, Wash. (EP) — About 1% of American men consider themselves exclusively homosexual, according to a national survey of male sexual behavior released April 14.

The study was conducted by the Alan Guttmacher Institute, the former research arm of Planned Parenthood, and is called the most thorough examination of American men's sexual behavior since the 1948 Kinsey report.

Kinsey said that 10% of men were mainly homosexual, as were about 5% of women. Though Kinsey's methodology has been widely criticized, the 10% figure has been frequently cited by gay activists and the popular

press.

The 1% figure is in line with other studies of sexual practices that have been done in Britain, France, and Denmark, and at the University of Chicago.

"Finally, the truth has surfaced," said Lou Sheldon, founder of the Traditional Values Coalition. "Homosexuality is a behavioral oddity, certainly not entitled to special protected status."

The findings were published in the journal *Family Planning Perspectives*. The researchers, who work at the Battelle Human Affairs Research Centers in Seattle, based their conclusions on 3,321 face-to-face interviews with men aged 20 through 39.

failed to produce even a third of the million they predicted would participate in the march."

During the march, some Christian groups called on participants to leave the homosexual lifestyle.

About 50 people representing Transformation Ex-gay Christian Ministry of Washington distributed more than 2,000 gospel tracts written especially for the march from

Security videotape deepens mystery of Yazoo City pastor's disappearance

By William H. Perkins Jr.

A security camera videotape from Alabama has provided one of the few clues in the disappearance of Jim Everett, 41, pastor of Southside Church in Yazoo City. He has been missing since he left home on the morning of April 27 to visit his mother in a Meridian nursing home.

His wife, Janet Everett, said authorities traced a credit card purchase on the day of his disappearance to a Tuscaloosa, Ala., store that has a videotape security system. There was also another transaction in Montgomery, Ala., later that afternoon.

"It appears from the Tuscaloosa videotape that he is alone, and that he is not being forced. We are confident now that he was not abducted. I initially feared that he had fallen asleep at the wheel, or picked up a hitchhiker to witness to him, as he sometimes did," she said.

Janet Everett said she suspects her husband may have suffered a physical or medical problem.

"There are some indications of

this in the past — family history, and subtle hints. I am concerned for his safety; if he is unable to think clearly, someone may take advantage of him," she pointed out.

Everett left his home at 9 a.m. on April 27, driving a red 1991 Geo Prizm with Mississippi license plate number 1FEN200. The car's windshield has a 12-inch horizontal crack on the left side at driver's eye level.

His height is 5'11," and his weight is 200 pounds. He has blue eyes and brown hair with heavy graying. His driver's license lists his full name, James W. Everett, but he goes by "Jim" or "Jimmy."

Everett, son of a Baptist minister, was born in Belzoni. He graduated from New Orleans Seminary in 1981, and also holds a doctorate from a Florida seminary.



Everett

In addition to his pastorate at Southside, he has been at Oak Park Church in New Orleans; Tinsley and Ogden Churches in Yazoo County; Skyview, Westhaven, and Bennington Park Churches in Memphis; and Benton Church in Benton.

"Please continue to pray for Jim's safety and protection, and that God will place the right people in his path who will recognize he needs assistance. I am deeply grateful for the support of Christian friends from all over; that is where my strength has come from," Janet said.

She also made a plea to fellow Baptists and Christians to post copies of this article at truck stops, service stations, restaurants, and other places so that people can be on the lookout for her husband.

Anyone with information on the whereabouts of Jim Everett should contact Detectives John Abel or Wade Woods of the Yazoo City Police Department at (601) 746-1131.

Thursday, May 13, 1993

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5

Southern Baptist Religious Education Association

Annual Meeting

June 13-14, 1993

Doubletree at Allen Center, Houston

Theme: Creative Approaches to Tomorrow's Challenges

Sunday afternoon

- 1:00 Registration opens
- 2:00 Introduction of Program — Bill Cromer, SBREA president; professor of Christian education, Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.
- Devotional — William B. Rogers, dean of the School of Christian Education, Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.
- Music for Inspiration — Cynthia Clawson, vocal artist, Nashville
- 2:40 Nominating Committee Report
- Theme: "Shifting Christian Education into the Future Tense: Anticipating Tomorrow's Challenges" — Tom Sine, author; president of Mustard Seed Associates, Seattle
- 3:30 Membership Committee Report
- 3:35 Break
- 3:55 Focus Groups
- 4:50 Adjourn
- Dinner
- 5:00 Board Meeting

Sunday evening

- 7:00 Hearing our Responses — Bill Taylor, SBREA president-elect; associate pastor/minister of education, Prestonwood Church, Dallas
- 7:20 Response — Tom Sine
- 7:40 Dramatic Monologue: "Mary Magdalene" — Mozelle Clark Sherman, professor of church music, Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.
- 8:00 "Discerning Biblical Vision" — Tom Sine
- 8:45 Dramatic Monologue: "A Contrast: The Mothers of Judas and Jesus" — Mozelle Clark Sherman
- 9:00 Fellowship

Monday morning

- 7:30 New Member Breakfast
- Breakfast for state & regional REA presidents
- 8:45 Morning Session — Joel Harrison, SBREA vice president, director of educational ministries, Atlanta Baptist Association, Atlanta
- Music for Inspiration — Cynthia Clawson
- 9:10 "A Future History: The One-Room Church" — Bob Hughes, professor of communications and mass media, Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.
- 10:00 Fellowship Break sponsored by the Annuity Board
- 10:30 Interest Groups — Lawrence Klempnauer, vice president for student services, Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas
- 11:45 SBREA Luncheon — Dennis Swanberg, pastor, First Church, West Monroe, La., speaker
- Presentation of Distinguished Leader Award Recipient

Morning afternoon

- 1:45 Music for Inspiration — Cynthia Clawson
- 2:00 Business Session
- 2:50 "Creating New Possibilities: Wild Hope" — Tom Sine
- 3:30 Passing of Gavel
- 3:35 Adjourn

S.C. association revises stance on WMU speaker

PAWLEYS ISLAND, S.C. (BP) — The South Carolina Baptist Association that voted in January to withdraw its invitation to WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien to speak at its annual meeting in 1995 has reconsidered its decision.

The Waccamaw Baptist Association's executive committee had voted 25-22 Jan. 18 to rescind its invitation to O'Brien because the pastor of the host church, Charles Thrower of Juniper Bay in Conway, did not want a woman to speak from his pulpit and because he said WMU was abandoning its historic heritage.

At its quarterly meeting April 19 at Pawleys Island Church, the executive committee voted to instruct its annual meeting committee to search for a different site for the 1995 annual meeting and to

invite a national WMU leader to speak. O'Brien was not specifically named.

No count was taken on the motion but director of missions Bill Harrill said it passed by "a definite majority."

Harrill said the association's annual meeting committee will meet in May to decide on another location for the 1995 meeting and to decide on which WMU leader to invite. These recommendations will be presented at this year's annual meeting Oct. 18.

The association's moderator, Kevin Childs, pastor of Green Sea Church, said the January vote left the association "very polarized." A compromise he is suggesting is that the association invite a WMU leader to speak specifically about the work of WMU and another person to bring a sermon.

Linkletter: Exercise, volunteer to ward off depression

By Jim Burton

ATLANTA (BP) — This year Art Linkletter celebrates the 30th anniversary of his 50th birthday.

"I'm a young man," said the pioneer of radio and television talk shows. Linkletter was a featured speaker at the 1993 Senior Adult Convention in Atlanta, April 26-28.

For Americans who remember his long-running TV shows "People Are Funny" and "House Party," Linkletter is an American institution. A humble beginning magnifies the accomplishments.

Born in Moosejaw, Saskatchewan, Canada, Linkletter was an orphan. A traveling Baptist lay preacher, Fulton Linkletter, and his wife learned of the abandoned child while preaching in Canada. They later adopted him.

Much like the father of foreign missions, William Carey, Linkletter's adopted father was a shoe cobbler. The trade supported his preaching ministry.

"He examined soles and souls," Linkletter recalled of his father who was always doing evangelis-



ATLANTA — Few seniors attending the second Senior Adult Convention traveled the way Rachel Anderson did. Alone, she rode the bus from Boston, Mass., to Atlanta. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

tic work.

Linkletter often went with his father on "evangelistic forays" and vividly recalls playing the triangle during street corner services.

As his career unfolded in radio and TV, Linkletter became "less

attentive to his beliefs." But a personal tragedy brought him back to the roots of his faith. His daughter, Diane, died of a drug overdose 25 years ago.

Linkletter is quick to share the lessons he learned then.

"Don't blame yourself," Linkletter advises parents whose children suffer tragedy. "You cannot protect your child from the potholes of life, though you should try to prepare them (for life's hardships)."

"One thing losing a child does is make you much more loving of others," he said. "Don't delay telling others you love them."

Recall the good times, Linkletter tells grieving parents. "You wouldn't give up the good times just to avoid the grief, would you?"

The lessons of life Linkletter shares reinforces what he believes was his calling: speaking, teaching, and preaching.

Following Diane's death, Linkletter became a spokesman against drug abuse. His work in drug abuse prevention and education led him to understand that a major cause of drug abuse is poor

self-esteem. This led to motivational speaking that affirms the worth of individuals. More recently, he has become an advocate and spokesman for senior adults, calling himself a messenger for positive aging.

The concern for senior adults ties back to his drug abuse campaigns. A growing number of senior adults are fighting depression — a common problem in the age group — with alcohol, Linkletter said.

Volunteerism is a major defense against depression, followed by what Linkletter calls a free prescription to cure most common ailments — aerobic exercise. Coupled with faith, an active lifestyle committed to serving others will ward off depression while building one's sense of worth.

"The young older person (65-75) must give serious thought to how they are going to make life interesting," Linkletter said. "You have to think about growing older. Make plans and have something to get up for."

Burton writes for Brotherhood Commission.



ATLANTA — Browsing in the Baptist Book Store at the second Senior Adult Convention held April 26-28 are Frances Williams (left) of Petal-Harvey Church, and Blondell Parker of Calvary Church, both of Petal. (BP photo by Jim Burton)

North Delta opens crisis center to help pregnant women, prevent abortions

By Helen Johnson

In January 1992, M.C. Johnson, director of missions for North Delta Association, approached the executive committee of the association about the need for a crisis pregnancy center. The idea was enthusiastically received, and association moderator Thomas Tutor, pastor of Oakhurst Church in Clarksdale, was instructed by the executive committee to appoint a committee to study the situation, make suggestions, and report back to the executive committee in April.

Carol Ann Waller was elected

chairman of the committee, and they worked for several months collecting data on the Delta, the high rate of unwed mothers, and other information. One member visited a number of other crisis pregnancy centers to see how they operated.

The recommendation of the committee in April was to proceed with all expediency. The executive committee was very encouraging. The committee learned about SAV-A-LIFE in Birmingham, and contacted executive director Bob Foust. Foust came to Clarksdale to survey the situation, meet with the committee, visit churches, speak to ministers, and meet with interested local people.

The process was slow. The committee had no money, so they decided to have the James Blackwood Quartet come for a fundraising concert. That was very profitable and gave them the momentum to secure necessary items for the center.

At the annual meeting of North Delta Association in October 1992, Richard and Carol Ann Waller presented the study and recommendations to go with SAV-A-LIFE. It was unanimously approved.

At the same meeting, the association voted to sell the house that had been the home of the director of missions, who had recently purchased his own home. Several days later, the committee approached the association to use that house in Lyon for the crisis pregnancy center. The center was moving right along, with open house on Feb. 21. The center opened to clients on Feb. 26.

The center was furnished by Furniture Gallery in Clarksdale, with the idea that all items would be for sale at the open house. The open house was attended by more than 100 people and many items were sold that day.

Foust and his assistant, Sandy Primm, came to Clarksdale and trained 19 women as counselors, including three doctors' wives, three pastors' wives, five registered nurses, and six school teachers.

Our purpose is to lead these women (in a crisis pregnancy) to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. This is a Christian alternative to abortion, and it is our desire to be used of God as a tool in spreading the good news and combating the sin of abortion.

Johnson presently serves as director of the center.



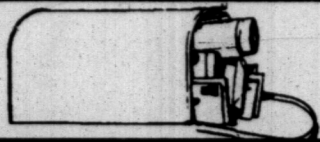
ATLANTA — Marvell and Lamar Trussell with Norman Bailey (center) talk before the opening service of the second Senior Adult Convention in Atlanta. All three are from Temple Church, Hattiesburg. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)



More than 100 people signed in for the Feb. 21 open house at the crisis pregnancy center project of North Delta Association. The center is the first ministry project of the Mississippi River Ministry, a Baptist multi-state effort to attack the poverty found in counties along the Mississippi River.



On hand for the Feb. 21 open house at the North Delta Association's crisis pregnancy center were counselors Brenda Britt (left), Carol Waller (right), and M.C. Johnson (center), director of missions for North Delta Association.



Letters to the editor



Crippling experience

Editor:
For several weeks I've had a beautiful robin with a broken leg in my yard. He sits all day flat on the ground like a setting hen and pecks his worms out of the ground. The amazing thing is he still has a healthy, beautiful body, and can still sing and fly, but he is crippled.

One day this week I watched him out my kitchen window as he sat all day in the pouring down rain and the wind. I felt sorry for him, then I was reminded of how God takes care of the birds just as he does us. I thought about how beautiful he was, and how he could still sing and fly, but he can't live a full, normal life because he is crippled.

Then for some reason, my thoughts went to a letter in the *Baptist Record* last week (April 29) written by a preacher who had been terminated by his church. I thought about several others whom I know who have experienced the same thing in recent years. I thought about how crippled their lives are by what has happened to them.

This is an experience that will keep them from functioning normally in many areas of their lives for a long time. Even though they, just as my granddaughter did the robin, look the same, the crippling effect of the termination will remain.

Many people offer them bread in various forms and reach out to help them, just as my granddaughter did the robin, but the crippling is still there.

But, good news — they can still sing and fly! They can rise above it, because the same heavenly Father who cares for a crippled bird cares for them. God called

them to preach and to minister, and he hasn't revoked that call.

Jesus never pastored a church, but he was the greatest minister who ever lived on the earth. These preachers' ministries can never be taken away from them.

Mrs. Homer Worsham
Holly Springs

Assault on leadership

Editor:

I am appalled by the critical attitude toward conservative SBC leaders reflected in the article "Grassroots affirmation sought by five Baptist leaders" (*Baptist Record*, April 15). This article suggests that the WMU is "under attack by the conservative leadership of the SBC."

Was WMU born as a feminist movement to liberate women from a "male-dominated, fundamentalist-dominated" SBC? Are the leaders of the SBC driven by a spirit that what they "can't control, they want to destroy?"

The effort by Daniel Vestal and his group should be recognized for what it is — not an effort to stimulate affirmation of the WMU but an effort to discredit conservative leaders of the SBC. The affirmation sought by Vestal's group is a condemnation of SBC conservatism.

Grassroots Southern Baptists are misled to believe that supporting this group will affirm WMU. Vestal's leadership in the CBF should be sufficient to expose the agenda of this self-appointed group.

Any affirmation of WMU should await its positive response to the Executive Committee's Resolution of Concern and Commitment (*Baptist Record*, April 4), requesting its "singular cooperation with the Con-

vention and its mission boards and its undivided commitment to the Cooperative Program, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions." Let the WMU declare a continuation of the "exclusive relationship of 105 years which has been so wondrously blessed by God."

This Mississippi Baptist is distressed at the use of the *Baptist Record* to promote an agenda of criticism and opposition of our SBC leaders. Such derogatory remarks assault the integrity of our duly-elected leaders and the integrity of Baptists who elected them, further divides our convention, and hinders the work of our Lord.

J. Frank Jones
Pope

Let's come together

Editor:

The three pastors who had the greatest influence for good in my life did not like each other.

These three preachers had two things in common: each was strong-willed and did not care for the other two.

One of these men influenced people all across the United States, so he did whatever he wanted to do and ignored the other two.

The second was one of the best Bible preachers I have ever heard, but he could use some stinging critical remarks when talking about the other two.

The third minister was a good preacher and one of the best friends a young preacher could have in this world. He simply would have nothing to do with the other two.

I am happy to have been a friend to each of these men. When in the company of each man, I always tried to speak something good about the other two. I never became a news bearer for either. How could I ever speak unkind words about a brother? I do not like to wear labels, either "moderate" or "fundamental." It bothers me when I hear one brother speak evil against another brother. I do not think God is pleased with the way we (SBC) have been acting for at least 22 years. It did not start in Houston, but it could stop in Houston, if we could come together and be Christian.

People who are kept in the dark about what is going on will be down on whatever it is. Our human nature makes us suspicious of anything we do not understand or are kept in the dark about.

Every person working for any (SBC) agency or auxiliary should have their salary or allowance published annually in their own publication or the state paper, and the complete budget of the agency or auxiliary.

I would like to see us come together in Houston and affirm WMU and request that they go on promoting missions worldwide.

May God bless each of us is my prayer.

William T. Irwin, pastor
Oakland Church
Oakland

Concerned for weary

Editor:

During one of my "anxious moments" God inspired me to write an encouragement to myself, a "Love Note" if you will. If anyone reading this is helped as much as I was in penning it, to God be the glory.

Love Note

Dear One:

My heart is full of love for you. I know of your love for me because you do so much for me. You work hard to see that others know about me. You give unselfishly not only of your money, but your talents and time. Some days you are so busy doing good, that you almost don't have time for me, but I know you love me. You show it in the way you speak my name... you call on me even when you don't realize you're doing it. You sing about me in your heart when you've accomplished a hard task. You think about me and wonder whether or not I hear you. You share your home with those who need shelter.

Many others have felt the same way you do and I have been able to help them to know that as they continue in their faithfulness, others see their example and learn from it. However, there have been those who get tired and give up. They pull away from what I had intended for them to do and wait for others to come in and do their job. Usually, the ones left with the job are the younger, weaker ones that don't understand what it is they are supposed to do. In cases like this, my plan is never completed, because the ones that I intended to lead the

way; fell by the wayside. They gave up and let me down.

Name withheld by editor

Truth sets you free

Editor:

I address this to the homosexual. As you read this, please hold the thought God loves you.

Regarding comments in other letters, I do agree with those who give the Word of God that specifically reveals sin of which we are all guilty. I do not agree, however, with those whose words and attitudes either condemn the sinner along with the sin, or condone the sin along with the sinner. Christ, our example, neither condemned man nor condoned sin. And we Christians need be reminded that just because we haven't been guilty of this particular sin doesn't mean we haven't been guilty in other areas.

Whereas the Word of God reveals sin, we Christians sell others short when we don't also give God's Word revealing his answers to the problem of sin. We've heard from many regarding the problem. Let's give some answers. We need to recognize that the arguments and personal opinions of man never solved anything. We, who have been set free of other sins, need to have more compassion and understanding for those who are in captivity to this particular one!

Homosexuals, for the most part, cannot help themselves. The lack of knowledge of the whole Word of God causes them to rationalize and justify their actions in choosing or remaining in such lifestyles. We do not need to continue pointing to their sin, but to point them to the one who can still cast out and deliver them from such captivity. And, "Christian," don't get all bent out of shape because I use the term "cast out" and "deliverance." Jesus Christ, our example, listed "casting out" as the first sign to follow believers (Mark 16:27). Also, Jesus is the same today as he was yesterday (Hebrews 13:8). He works through those he's anointed and appointed in these areas of need. He loves and desires to set you free (John 8:32). If you can't believe the Word of God, who can you believe? There are many serving in these areas of need but Mike Williams of Olney, Ill., and Ray Kiertekles of Roswell, Ga., are two who minister deliverance with the love of Jesus Christ. The anointing power of God's love and Spirit works through both of these men to set captives free.

Betty Josey
Starkville

Editor's Note: Effective May 20, the *BAPTIST RECORD* will resume publishing letters on Freemasonry. The Home Mission Board will give its report at the June meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. The report states that membership in a Masonic order should be a matter of "personal conscience." Letters should be brief and to the point. All letters are subject to editing.

Make Your Reservations Now!



WMU Annual Meeting Houston's First Baptist Church

7401 Katy Freeway
Houston, Texas 77024

June 13-14, 1993

Exciting testimonies from home and foreign missionaries, reports of local missions projects, mission action conferences, music, drama, Executive Board report and much more!

Clip and mail coupon to:

Annual Meeting Tickets
Woman's Missionary Union
P.O. Box 830010
Birmingham, AL 35283-0010

Indicate number of tickets below.

Sunday evening, June 13, 6 p.m.

Westin Galleria Hotel
5060 West Alabama
Houston, Texas 77056

- ☐ **WMU Banquet**
☐ **Baptist Nursing Fellowship Banquet**

@ \$18 each = \$

NO OTHER SUNDAY EVENING SESSION

Box lunch Monday noon, June 14

Houston's First Baptist Church

@ \$6 each = \$

Total amount enclosed \$

Make check payable to WMU.

Name

Address

Phone ()

Just for the Record



Shady Grove, Batesville, recently held a recognition service for GAS who have completed levels 1 and 5. Pictured, front row, are Amy Perkins, Courtney McGregor, Alesha Bailey; back row, Nicole Goodwin and Gail Perkins. Not pictured is Amanda Goodwin and Amanda Weaver. Leaders are Bettye Stewart and Sandra McGregor. John Stewart is pastor.



First Church, McComb, held its GA recognition service on April 5. Pictured, top photo, are Robin Adams, Brittney Serafin, Niki Gatlin, Elisha Skelton, Erin Alford, Hope Wilks, Elise Gilbert, Carly Smith; bottom photo, Kristen Prentiss, Heather Farmer, Aimee Rodgers, Michelle Ott, Melissa Barkdull, Kylan Stringer, Julie Van, Miriam Griffin, Ashley Moon, Maribeth Porter, Sheryl Hardy, Dawn Skelton, and Dawn Devine. Also pictured are GA leaders Debbie Rodgers, Rosie Adams, Cindy Farnham, Vickie Paredes, and Susan Hardy. Jimmy D. Porter is pastor.



Sherman Church, Sherman, dedicated its new Allen organ on March 21. The organ was dedicated in memory of Mrs. Maina Shands Bruce, church organist at the time of her death. She had served as either church pianist or organist for half a century. Darwin Brooks, music assistant at Harrisburg Church, Tupelo, provided special music. James E. Welch, pastor, brought the dedicatory message. Wilma Baker is the present church organist.

TRUTH, a contemporary Christian music group, will be in concert at First Church of Sharon, Laurel, on May 18 at 7 p.m. For further information, call 428-5319.

The Baptist Student Union at the United States Air Force Academy would like to contact the men and women coming to the Academy June 30 to begin training as basic cadets. Send name, address, and telephone number to Dwain Gregory, director of Baptist Student Ministries, 550 W. Woodmen Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80919, (719) 599-9094. The Academy will correspond with the cadet to secure flight arrival times and provide further information. Similar ministries are provided at West Point and the Naval Academy. At West Point contact Bill Blackwell, 29 Sheldon Drive, Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY 12518, (914) 534-3944. For the Naval Academy contact Dick Bumpass, 210 Hanover Street, Annapolis, MD 21401, (301) 263-0963.

A fellowship picnic will be held on the circle of Clarke College campus for former faculty/staff of Clarke College, Saturday, May 22, 11 a.m. Each family is requested to furnish a picnic lunch to feed their family plus one. "This time of festivities will provide the

New church/mission needs

Office furniture — desk and desk chair and chairs for counseling area; 6 or 8 ft. tables; pew Bibles; and curtains for windows in sanctuary. Contact Richard Brogan, Cooperative Missions Department, MBCB, (601) 968-3800, ext. 3961, for more information.



First Church, Belzoni, held its Acteen recognition service with the theme, "Crown Him with Many Crowns" on April 25. Pictured, from left, are Carrie Logan with crown bearer Katie Prather, Cindy Westbrook with crown bearer Bennett Dorris, Michelle Prewitt with crown bearer Kori Castle, and Somer Estes with crown bearer Jordan James. Acteen leader is Faye McKay. Bill McKay is pastor.

immediate former faculty/staff an opportunity to fellowship with one another before several move on to other areas. It will also offer the opportunity to set up a formal organization for future reunions," said Juanita West.

The annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Adult Education Association was held April 28-29 at Smoky Shadows Conference Center in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. Representatives were present from seven schools and agencies. All Southern Baptist institutions engaged in adult education programs by extension or otherwise may become a part of the Southern Baptist Adult Education Association. For more information, write Herman Williams, 2930 Flowers Road, South, Atlanta, GA 30341.

Castlewoods Church, Brandon, will host a Cult Awareness Seminar led by Sandy and Beth Barlow, representatives of the Interfaith Witness Department of the Home Mission Board. The seminar will be Sunday, May 16, 6 p.m. and Wednesday, May 19, 6:30 p.m. Larry McDonald is pastor.

Woolmarket Church, Biloxi, exceeded its Annie Armstrong Easter Offering goal of \$1,000 for home missions by receiving \$1,174.50 through the month of April. Argile

Revival Results

Newhebron (Lawrence): April 25-28; Don Boone, Mobile, Ala., evangelist; Charles E. Davis Sr., pastor, Newhebron, music; two professions of faith; two by letter.

First, Corinth: April 16-18; Felix Snipes, Atlanta, Ga., evangelist; Dennis H. Smith, pastor; 29 professions of faith.

Old Union (Tishomingo): April 18-21; Joe Holcomb, evangelist; Tony Curtis, pastor; six professions of faith.

Smith is interim pastor.

New Salem Church, Liberty, will hold a dedication service for its new building May 16 at 1:30 p.m., following a covered dish luncheon in the fellowship hall at 12:30. Bill Hardy, coordinator of Partnership Missions for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will be the guest speaker. John P. Jones, director of missions, Mississippi Association, will also be on program. Pastor David Fortenberry will preach the dedication message.

First Church, Poplarville, will present the musical "Love Will Be Our Home" on May 16 and 17 at 7 p.m. The musical will be under the direction of Greg Green, minister of music. Bob Rogers is pastor.

Reservations for the WMU trip to Glorieta must be made by Monday, May 17. Cost for the July 16-24 trip is \$575. Contact the WMU office at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, (601) 968-3800.

Thomas Ozbirn, minister, dies

Thomas L. Ozbirn, born on Feb. 26, 1942, died March 17 after a lengthy illness. Funeral services were conducted March 19 at Central Church, Golden.

He was ordained Sept. 4, 1974. In Mississippi, he pastored Calvary Church, Belmont, and New Home Church, Fulton. At the time of his death, he was a member of Central Church, Golden.

Ozbirn was a graduate of Blue Mountain College. Before entering full time ministry, he was an accountant in Alabama.

He is survived by his wife, Rebecca Ginn Ozbirn; three daughters, Alicia Sparks of Tupelo, and Melody Harris and Michele Alexander of Belmont; granddaughter Anna Michael Harris; his mother, Leema Mae Ozbirn of Belmont; sisters, Opaline Moses of Belmont and Mary Pauline Garrett of Dennis.

Mississippi College to award 751 degrees

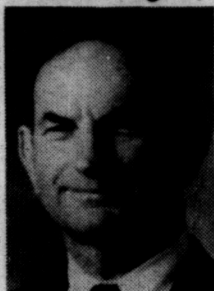
William G. Tanner, executive director-treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma and a former Mississippi pastor, will be the featured speaker for Mississippi College graduation ceremonies, Saturday, May 15, at 2 p.m. in the A. E. Wood Coliseum.

Tanner

The graduating class of the 167th regular session will be the largest in the history of the college, with 751 individ-

uals scheduled to receive degrees. There are 509 candidates for the bachelor degree, 136 for the masters, and 106 for the doctor of jurisprudence given by the School of Law.

Samuel D. Anderson, a native of Magee and a 1957 graduate of MC, will receive the honorary doctor of laws degree. He is president and chief executive officer of Trancel Corporation of Santa Ana, Calif.,



Anderson

an early stage research and development company whose mission is to develop a cure for insulin-dependent diabetes.

The honorary doctor of divinity degree will be awarded to Jerry Rankin, Area Director for Southern Asia and the Pacific for the Foreign Mission Board with headquarters in Singapore. He is a native of Tupelo and a 1964 graduate of MC.



Rankin

We are doing something right.

Through the work of the Home Mission Board and gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions, Southern Baptists are doing something right. One hundred percent of the home missions offering goes to support 4,868 missionaries serving Christ and sharing his love in all 50 states, the Caribbean, American Samoa and Canada, and in more than 100 languages.



We are doing something right in Portland, Oregon.

Missionaries Troy and Jamae Smith direct the SAFE House, an inner city ministry point where up to 13 drug addicts can come to live and find a way out of the bondage of Satan's addiction.



We are doing something right in Cambridge, Massachussetts.

Missionary pastor Dale Cross has led his church, Metropolitan Baptist Church, to start more than 20 churches in its 28 years of existence.



We are doing something right along the Mexican border in Arizona.

Missionary Ross Hanna has worked for 22 years overseeing three Baptist centers that minister to refugees.



We are doing something right by involving 70,000 volunteers.

Long-term and short-term volunteer mission assignments saved the Home Mission Board more than \$95 million last year.



We are doing something right in Juneau, Alaska.

The Glacier Valley Baptist Church has started a church every year for the last seven years in the capital city that is 90 percent unchurched.

Please continue to support these and other home missionaries through your gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. If you have not given to the offering this year, please consider doing so now. If you have already given, please consider another sacrificial offering.



Do Something!
Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions
National Goal: \$38 million

This message about the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering is provided by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Woman's Missionary Union and the Brotherhood Commission.

Thursday, May 13, 1993

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

Homecomings

Mt. Gilead, Meridian: May 16; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 10:45 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall at noon; singing, 1:30 p.m.; Dennis Dunn, Pearl, evangelist; Leta Stroud, Conway, Ark., guest singer; Jim Smith, pastor.

Summerwood, Olive Branch: May 16; 10th anniversary; Biblical drama presented by W. L. Compere, Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, Bible study, 9 a.m.; worship, 10 a.m. with Compere; lunch at noon followed by gospel singing from 1:30-2:30 p.m.; Armond Taylor, pastor.

Bellevue, Thaxton: May 16; 11 a.m.; Carey Myers, former pastor, guest speaker; Lamar Pickens, pastor.

Causeyville, Meridian: May 16; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish in fel-

lowship hall, noon; Ron Mercer, Meridian, guest speaker; Jeff Mercer, Meridian, music; James Walker, interim pastor.

Wayside, Scobey: May 16; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; Truman D. Scarborough, pastor, First, Coffeetown, guest speaker; dinner on the grounds; 1:30 p.m. praise service.

Antioch (Lawrence): May 23; James Algood, speaker; lunch in fellowship hall, noon; afternoon singing; John H. Hedgepeth, pastor.

Concord, McCall Creek (Franklin): May 23; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on grounds, noon; afternoon singing and cemetery business, 1:15; no night services; "Before & After," McCall Creek, guest musicians; Tony Mullins, pastor, speaker.

Revival Dates

Woolmarket, Biloxi: youth revival, May 14-16; Wilton McMorris, Livingston, La., youth director, evangelist; services, 7 p.m., Fri. and Sat.; 11 a.m. Sunday; Argile Smith, interim pastor.

Calvary, Greenwood: May 16-19; Clarence Adkins, Catawba, Lancaster, S.C., evangelist; Sandy Land, First, Itta Bena, music; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Jeff Floyd, pastor.

Franklin Creek, Pascagoula: May 16-21; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Bill Bozeman, Mobile, evangelist; Billy Ready, music.

Antioch, Columbus: May 16-20; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Kara Blackard,

pastor, Wheeler Grove, Corinth, evangelist; Edward N. Knox, pastor.

West Corinth, Corinth: May 16-19; 7 p.m.; Dennis Johnsey, evangelist; Ronnie Cottingham, music; Gary A. White, pastor.

Bellevue, Thaxton: May 17-21; 7 p.m.; Lamar Pickens, pastor, preaching.

New Salem, Liberty: May 16-19; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Stan Nowell, pastor, East Fork, Liberty, evangelist; Dennis Lea, Terry's Creek, Magnolia, music; David Fortenberry, pastor.

Leaf River (Smith): May 16-20; D.W. Sewell, Highland Church, Laurel, evangelist; services, 7 p.m. nightly.

Names in the News

Two alumni will be honored by the Mississippi College National Alumni Association during a meeting of the Fifty-Year Club planned for May 14. Landrum B. Shettles of Las Vegas, Nev., a pioneer in research on in vitro fertilization who has spent a lifetime studying the reproductive system; along with Joy Morgan Davis, a

Christian lecturer and dramatist from Dallas, Texas, will both be awarded the Order of the Golden Arrow Award as part of the dinner meeting set for 6 p.m. in the B. C. Rogers Student Center. Shettles is a 1933 graduate of Mississippi College and Davis received her undergraduate degree from Mississippi College in 1952.

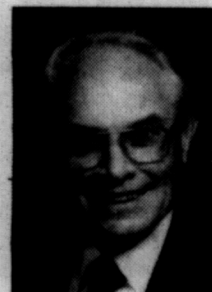
William Carey College schedules graduation

William Carey College expects approximately 225 students will receive baccalaureate degrees and 50 students will receive graduate degrees during its spring commencement, Saturday May 15 at 3 p.m. in the Dumas L. Smith auditorium in the Thomas Fine Arts Center.

Earl Kelly, executive director-treasurer emeritus, Mississippi Baptist Convention

Board, will be the featured speaker.

Graduates and their families are invited to a picnic on the lawn of the President's home following rehearsal on Friday.



Kelly



Jullus Thompson (standing), director of the Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, makes a point during his lecture to associate degree students at Broadmoor Church in Jackson. New Orleans Seminary offers both associate and master's degrees through the seminary's extension center in Jackson. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Seminary repays debt by bringing classes to Miss.

By Debbie Moore

Mississippi Baptists played a major role in founding New Orleans Seminary 75 years ago, and one of the ways the seminary has shown its gratitude has been to offer accredited classes in Jackson for students unable to move to the Crescent City.

Courses offered at a location off the main campus, known as an extension center, bring the seminary closer to the needs of students and churches, said Fuller B. Saunders, area director for the seminary.

"Sometimes bivocational pastors or those who pastor full time don't feel they can go to school while serving a church. The seminary's extension center in Mississippi provides them an alternative. They can attend seminary and continue to serve their church at the same time," he said.

Besides men and women who already serve as church staff members, students enrolled at the extension center have included a barber, mechanic, truck driver, and banker.

New Orleans Seminary offers quality theological education at its Mississippi extension centers on both the associate and master's degree levels. Both programs are fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and

Schools, and the graduate degree program is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.

Applicants for the associate degree program must be at least 25 years of age and have a high school diploma or equivalency. Applicants for the master's degree program must be at least 20 years of age and have an accredited bachelor's degree, including at least 30 hours of liberal arts studies.

All applicants must have been a Christian for at least one year, have a recommendation from a local church, and received approval of the application form.

Associate degree classes for a 16-week semester meet every Monday at Broadmoor Church on Northside Drive in Jackson. Qualified students may enroll on the first day of class.

Master's degree classes for an eight-week term meet every Monday in Provine Chapel on the Mississippi College campus in Clinton. Registration must be completed by August 1.

For more information, contact the Extension Center Office, New Orleans Seminary, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, Louisiana 70126-4858. Telephone: 1-800-662-8701, ext. 3323.

Saunders suffers stroke while touring Holy Land

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Fuller B. Saunders, 72, longtime Mississippi pastor and area director for New Orleans Seminary extension programs, returned to his Jackson home May 11 after suffering a stroke in Israel on May 5 while leading a tour of the Holy Land.

Saunders' wife, Cannie, said that it was fortunate the stroke occurred in the city of Jerusalem and not during a tour of the Israeli countryside, where medical assistance would have been farther away.

He was alert throughout his hospitalization in Jerusalem, she

reported, and the stroke apparently did not result in paralysis or speech complications. Their son, Brent, of Jackson, left for Israel May 7 to help his father return to Jackson after Israeli doctors cleared him for travel.

"I have been completely overwhelmed by the prayers and calls from our Christian friends. It means everything," Cannie said.

Saunders served as pastor in a number of Mississippi churches during his career. His final pastorate before retiring was Mulberry Church in Houma, Louisiana.

Hectic lives no obstacle for those wishing to follow God's direction

By William H. Perkins Jr.

One works the land, one is a certified public accountant, and one is an optometrist. They are in their late thirties or early forties, which makes them atypical of students typically seen rushing across a college campus, late for class.

All share a common love of the Lord, however, that has driven these busy, career-minded men to seek the knowledge and understanding they need to better serve him. They are master's degree students at the New Orleans Seminary extension center at Mississippi College in Clinton.

"I don't know what the Lord will have me do, but I know he is leading me in this direction," said Park Neff, 39, a cotton, rice, and soybean farmer from Arcola. Neff, a member of First Church in Greenville, begins his school day by leaving home at 5:30 a.m. for the drive to Clinton. He returns home around 10 p.m.

"It's especially tough during the harvest in the fall," he said.

Bart Terry, 44, the certified public accountant, is a deacon at Highland Church in Laurel. He drives to New Orleans each week for on-campus seminary classes in addition to his weekly sojourn to Clinton for the off-campus courses.

"I'm open to whatever God wants me to do. I'm interested in Christian education and church administration," he said, reflecting his accounting background.

Mantee resident Charlie Tillman,



Terry (standing), Tillman (left), Neff (right)

40, begins seeing optometry patients at his Eupora office before many people have awakened. The First Church, Houston, deacon then makes the two-hour run to Clinton in time for a 12:15 p.m. class.

"Since being saved while in optometry school, I've been active in missions. This will help me get more prepared for missions work," he said, which goes along with his career of meeting people's needs.

Carl Hudson, coordinator of New Orleans Seminary programs at Mississippi College, is impressed with the uncommon determination that keeps their busy lives on track.

"There is a deep sense of commitment. They are allowing the Lord to work in their lives," he pointed out.

Persons interested in the off-campus master's degree program at Mississippi College can get more information by using the New Orleans Seminary address and telephone number in the accompanying article at left.



HANDBELL CHOIRS
Send for FREE brochure on "Assigning and Marking Handbell Music." Send to: Bridgeway Press, P.O. Box 21863, Little Rock, AR 72221



BAPTISTRIES
HEATERS, PUMPS
FACTORY DIRECT
TOLL FREE NATIONWIDE
1-800-251-0679
FIBERGLASS BAPTISTRY CO.
3511 HIXSON PIKE • CHATTANOOGA, TN 37415

CLASSIFIED ADS

RATE: 50 cents per word, \$5 minimum. Cash with order except on contract advertising. Include name, address, zip code, and phone number in word count. No blind ads.

BIG TOP GOSPEL TENTS, all sizes. Open Air Ministries. (318) 939-2239.

THE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH in Columbus, Miss., is presently looking for a part time minister of music and youth. Any individual who is interested should mail a resume to: Community Baptist Church, Search Committee Chairman, 2490 Yorkville Road East, Columbus, MS 39702 or they may call 327-5306 or 328-2105.

CHURCH BUS: 41 passenger—40,000 miles. Twin A.C. Top condition. Reasonably priced. Call (205) 626-5377.

PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS in Residential Treatment: Children's Agency is seeking married couples to deliver professional residential services to troubled youth. Applicants must be at least 21 years old and have a bachelor's degree from an accredited university. Comprehensive training and support program provided. Excellent benefits. Call (601) 353-4715.

***OLD ORIENTAL RUGS** wanted. Call 1-800-527-0861.

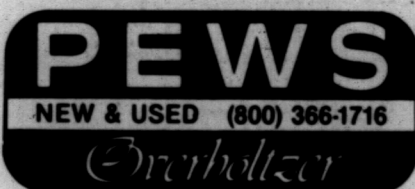
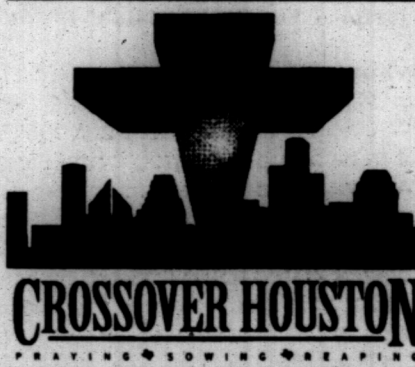
PASTOR'S SECRETARY, Northminster Baptist Church. Computer skills required. Send resume to Northminster Baptist Church, Personnel Committee, 3955 Ridgewood Rd., Jackson, MS 39211.

CALVARY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, Meridian, Miss., is accepting applicants for the position of school principal. Interested parties should send a resume to Calvary Baptist Church, P.O. Box 4097, Meridian, MS 39304.

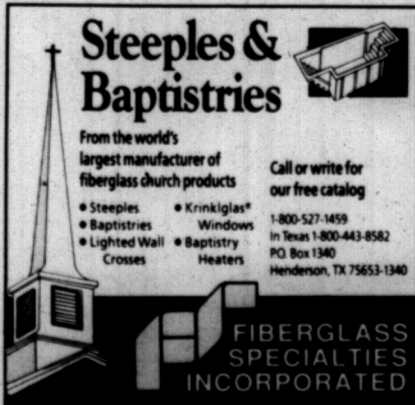
100% MEDICAL SUPPLEMENT pays in hospital, doctor's office, clinic or home, plus files claims for you. Send name, address, age, & phone number to Senior Citizens Plans, P.O. Box 611, Clinton, MS 39056; or call (601) 992-2785.

FOR SALE: Wurlitzer organ, model, D42, three key board. Excellent condition. \$1,500. Bettye Reed Rt. 2, New Albany, MS 38652; (601) 534-3304.

BYRAM AREA church needs childcare worker for services and events. Call Janelle Johnson at (601) 371-2954 (leave message).



AUTHORS WANTED
Leading subsidy book publisher seeks manuscripts of all types: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, scholarly, juvenile and religious works, etc. New authors welcomed. Send for free 32-page illustrated booklet H-101 Vantage Press, 516 W. 34 St., New York, NY 10001



Uniform Encountering Christ



By Chuck Pourciau
John 4:7-15, 20-26

We are so fortunate that the Holy Spirit led John to include this account in his Gospel. Herschel Hobbs described this encounter as the most marvelous account of personal soul winning on record. Yet in this conversation with the Samaritan woman, we learn much more than just how to witness.

Jesus asked a Samaritan woman for a drink (vv. 7-9). The key words in this statement are *Samaritan woman*. She was shocked that a Jewish man would even speak to her, much less ask her for a drink. If ever there was an opportunity for prejudice, it was here. They were of different race, nationality, sex, social position, and religion. Yet Jesus broke through those barriers. Jesus didn't see barriers. He saw people in need.

The church must not reconstruct barriers that have been torn down by the blood of Jesus. Too often we'll accept anyone who is not too different from us. Too often we limit our evangelism to those who are just like us. We need to see people the way Jesus sees them. To do otherwise is to sin.

It is also encouraging to realize that God's offer of grace is extended to all of us regardless of race, gender, past failure, political position, or anything else. God dearly loves all.

Jesus offered the Samaritan woman living water (vv. 10-15). Jesus told her that she should be asking him for the water of life. She wondered how he planned to get it since he had no bucket. He told her that the water he offered would quench her thirst forever.

Jesus was not referring to physical thirst, but to spiritual thirst. This woman needed something to give her life meaning and fulfillment, for she had already proven a failure with five husbands. Jesus wanted to turn lifelong failure into permanent success. How long will lost people live failed lives before they realize the only answer to their deepest needs? The living water fulfills those deepest longings.

The Samaritan woman changed the subject (vv. 19-22). After Jesus revealed his knowledge of her personal life, she decided it was time to talk about something else. He got personal, so she decided to get theological.

People will often attempt to change the subject when you focus on their status as a sinner in need of the living water. They may even try to move the discussion to some topic of theological debate. But once the Lord has opened a witnessing door we must keep pressing forward to confront the lost person with the opportunity to trust the Lord. Don't let them change the subject. You may never return to the subject and may never have another opportunity to witness to that person.

Jesus described true worship (vv. 23-24). The woman thought she could predict a Jewish man's response to her question on worship, so she assumed she was in safe territory. Yet his answer surprised her, and he began to direct her back to the primary issue. True worship is not defined by a place but by an attitude of spirit and truth.

To worship in spirit is to worship God and not a church or a minister. To worship in truth is to make one's lifestyle consistent with his worship proclamation. True worship is not defined by the way one conducts himself in the worship service. True worship is defined by how he conducts himself after he leaves the worship service.

Jesus revealed himself as the Messiah (vv. 25-26). The Samaritan woman made one last attempt to change the subject when she said that she would wait for the Messiah to clear all this up for her. Jesus ended her arguments permanently when he revealed that he was the Messiah.

There is no going beyond Jesus and no higher authority, for there is no fuller revelation of God. Man's future will depend on what he does with Jesus and not on anything else. What will you do with Jesus?

We know what the Samaritan woman did with Jesus, because she became a shrewd witness (v. 29). This social outcast became a powerful witness, because many of that town trusted Christ "because of the woman's testimony" (v. 39). It is amazing what can happen in a person's life after she encounters the Messiah.

Pourciau is pastor, First Church, Louisville.

Bible Book God's intervention in distress



By Guy A. Hughes
Isaiah 33, 37

A fisherman who was out of fellowship with the Lord was at sea with his godless companions when a storm came up which threatened to sink their ship. His friends begged him to pray; but he dissented, saying, "It's been a long time since I've done that or even entered a church." At their insistence, however, he finally cried out, "O Lord, I haven't asked anything of you for 15 years, and if you help us now and bring us safely to land, I promise I won't bother you again for another 15!"

God desires to have an intimate relationship with us. Too often we are like a rebellious teenager who wants his parents to bail him out of trouble and then tells them to get lost. God's intervention in Judah's distress teaches that God is determined to assist his people in their difficulties. It demonstrates to us his willingness to forgive and restore the once broken relationship. Will we respond?

A prayer for God to deliver (33:2). When the people of Judah finally realized the seriousness of their condition they pled for God's assistance. The use of "gracious" in this verse implies a recognition that any love God would choose to extend to them was unmerited. Their complete humiliation at the hands of their oppressors produced a godly sorrow which led to repentance. The lesson was finally learned. We cannot rely on our own strength. We must trust in God.

The divine King in a blissful Jerusalem (33:17-22). For years the people had been subjected to terror, tax collectors, and foreign invaders. They could no longer remember what a peaceful environment was like. Isaiah describes it: Judah's King would be restored in all of his glory. They would not only see the King restored but the kingdom, shriveled by the invaders, would be stretched in all directions. There would be no more enemies in the land. Warfare would be replaced with festivals. The reason for such bliss was because God himself was present again with his people, and they with him. Their relationship was restored. The prodigal people had returned and the loving Father received them.

God's assurance of his intervention (37:6-7). Messengers from King Hezekiah came to seek Isaiah's prayers for God's help (37:1-5). He already had a response for them. They were not to be afraid. God would not tolerate the arrogance of the Assyrians much longer. Now the people of Judah had learned their lesson, God would vindicate them. God reveals a rumor will be heard by the Assyrian king, Sennacherib, which would strike terror in his heart. The rumor was probably the report that the Egyptians were coming with an army to aid Judah (37:9). In fear, Sennacherib fled to Nineveh.

God's message concerning Sennacherib (37:21-23). The rumor of the approaching Egyptian army caused the arrogant Assyrian king to write Hezekiah a hostile letter demanding that Jerusalem surrender immediately. Hezekiah, this time, sought God's help (37:14-20). Isaiah was sent by God to answer his request. God's response consisted of two parts: a warning to the Assyrians and a message of reassurance to the Judeans. The blasphemy of the Assyrian king would no longer be tolerated by God.

God will sometimes use the arrogant to punish his people for sin. Yet, the arrogant should not take pleasure in this. Their doom is certain and eternal. Whereas, the discipline of the righteous is merciful and temporary. J.H. McConkey once asked a friend who was a physician, "What is the significance of God's touching Jacob upon the sinew of his thigh?"

The doctor replied, "That is the strongest tissue in the human body. A horse could scarcely tear it apart."

"Ah, I see," said McConkey, "the Lord must break us down at the strongest part of our self-life before he can fully bless us."

Ivor Powell has observed, "Permanent injury enforced a premature retirement from the ring of carnal aggression upon Jacob; yet he gained more by this solitary defeat than he won through a lifetime of conquests."

Hughes is pastor, Friendship Church, Grenada.

Life and Work Challenge to faithful service



By Laura Russell
Acts 5:17-21a, 29-33, 40-42

Around the world, the gospel has most often taken root in places prepared by the blood of martyrs. But before a person can give his life for the gospel, he must first live his life for the gospel. One way God trains his servants is to put them in places of service. Their desire to serve Christ is translated into the reality of faithful service to others.

Opposition to faithful service (vv. 17-18). The religious leaders were jealous — the apostles were commanding more respect than these religious leaders had ever received. The difference was the religious leaders demanded respect for themselves, and the apostles' goal was to bring reverence and respect to God. The apostles had power to do miracles, great boldness in preaching, and God's presence in their lives; yet they were not free from hatred and persecution. They were arrested, put in jail, beaten, and slandered. Faith in God does not make troubles disappear; it makes troubles appear less fearsome. We cannot expect everyone to react favorably when we share our faith in Christ. Some will be jealous, frightened, or threatened. However, we must be more concerned with serving God than the reactions of other people.

The call to faithful service (vv. 19-20). The apostles were released by an "angel of the Lord" during the night and were encouraged to continue witnessing to the people about the way of life and salvation. The imprisonment did not shake the courage of the apostles. The next morning, they took up their regular positions at the temple and began teaching. These apostles had a clear idea of their duty and function. They knew they were witnesses for Christ. A witness is a man who speaks from first-hand knowledge, a man who knows from personal experience that what he says is true. It is impossible to stop a man like that because it is impossible to stop the truth.

The expression of faithful service (v. 21a). The temple at daybreak was a busy place. Many people stopped at the temple to pray and worship at sunrise. The apostles were already there, ready to tell them the good news. This was nothing less than God's power working through the apostles. When we are convinced of the truth of Christ's resurrection and have experienced the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, we can have the confidence to speak out for Christ.

The reason for faithful service (vv. 29-32). The high priest told the apostles to refrain from preaching in the name of Jesus. But in their defense, Peter and the other apostles said that they "must obey God rather than men." They affirmed that Jesus, whom the Sadducees had tried to make a curse in the eyes of God (Deut. 21:23), had been exalted to the right hand of God. Instead of vengeance, there was forgiveness for those who would repent and believe in Christ.

The apostolic principle still holds. We must obey God rather than men. Many things struggle for our supreme allegiance. All sorts of pressures may be used to make us conform, but we should never compromise our convictions. Service to God should be our main priority.

Continued faithful service (vv. 33, 40-42). Peter and John were warned repeatedly not to preach, but they continued in spite of the threats. They rejoiced because of the honor connected with suffering for Christ. We, too, should live as Christ has asked, faithfully serving amid suffering and persecution. To what extent are you willing to go on faithfully serving Jesus Christ?

The work of the church requires every member's effort in order for the body of Christ to function effectively. The body needs you! Are you doing your part? Find a place to serve God and start contributing whatever time, talent, and money is needed. Then, at the end of our journey, we will have love and a welcome waiting. Chuck Swindoll writes, "It is the 'well done, good and faithful servant' we will hear. He is waiting to welcome us. To those who serve, Jesus promises a reward. And you can be sure he will keep his promise!"

Russell is a member of First Church, Brandon.

capsules

FIRE GUTS PART OF PHILIPPINE BAPTIST SEMINARY IN DAVAO: DAVAO CITY, Philippines (BP) — A fire gutted several buildings at the Philippines Baptist Theological Seminary in Davao City, Philippines, and narrowly missed destroying the school's library and dormitories. The fire destroyed the classroom building, the administration office, faculty offices, a conference room, and a storage space. The dormitories are connected to this area by covered walkways and would have burned if fire officials had not contained the blaze, according to Tony Latham, Southern Baptist missionary from Jackson, Tenn., who teaches at the seminary. The school's newly elected president, Edgar Aungon, and another faculty member lost their personal libraries and classroom and sermon notes. Latham and his wife, Kathy, who also teaches at the seminary, lost about 85% of their professional libraries. Mrs. Latham is from Kosciusko, Miss. Two other Southern Baptist missionaries teach at the seminary: Mike Andress, from Childress and Monahans, Texas, and Mike Anderson, from Coushatta, La. The seminary, begun as a Bible school almost 40 years ago by Southern Baptist missionaries, was formerly known as the Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary-Davao. About 800 students are enrolled in the seminary's extension program; about 90 students are enrolled in the campus program.

AMERICA IS LARGEST MISSION FIELD IN THE WESTERN WORLD: MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (EP) — George Hunter, author of *How to Reach Secular People*, says America has become the largest mission field in the western hemisphere. Hunter predicts by the year 2000, 37% of the population will have no church background. Hunter also states that Uganda has a higher percentage of professing Christians than the U.S.

MERCER TO CONSIDER DIVINITY SCHOOL: MACON, Ga. (ABP) — Mercer University may start its own divinity school if a study now underway proves the project feasible. Mercer trustees agreed April 15 to conduct the study at the request of Baptist pastors in Georgia. Mercer President Kirby Godsey will appoint a committee which will bring a report to the trustees' next meeting in December. The school joins several other Baptist colleges that either have started divinity schools or are considering such a move. The request for a divinity school came from a group of Georgia pastors, represented by Ches Smith, pastor of First Church of Tifton. "This is not something Mercer has pushed for," said Larry Brumley, director of communications for Mercer. "We need to underscore the university is not going into this study with the preconceived notion that we will or won't start a divinity school," he added. "Mercer is not going to start another school unless the money is there."

FMB STILL NEEDS INDIA VOLS DESPITE HINDU-MUSLIM STRIFE: RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Churches in India want 400 Southern Baptist volunteers to help them mark the bicentennial of pioneer missionary William Carey's arrival in India with evangelistic crusades in November. But so far only about 100 volunteers have indicated serious interest in participating. Reports of Hindu-vs.-Muslim religious violence in India may be frightening others. "Recent internal events have stopped our enlistment," reported Bill Peacock of the Foreign Mission Board's volunteer office. "I can't blame volunteers for not wanting to go if they read and see the news, but where we're going the people are open to the gospel." The partnership mission effort, part of "Cross Over India," will begin with simultaneous evangelistic crusades in 120 churches Nov. 5-9 and end with Nov. 13-14 celebrations in Calcutta, where Carey first preached in 1800.

LUTHERANS SCRAP DEACON ORDINATIONS: CHICAGO, Ill. (EP) — Plans to ordain deacons in the Lutheran church were scrapped in late March after leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) received hundreds of calls and letters from church members who opposed the proposal. Roman Catholics and Episcopalians ordain deacons. Lutherans have traditionally resisted attempts to create additional layers of church hierarchy.

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS RETURN TO SATURDAY EVENING POST'S PAGES: NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptists are featured in a four-page article in *The Saturday Evening Post's* May-June issue: "Southern Baptists: Beyond the Stained-Glass Windows." A similar article on Southern Baptists appeared in the April 1983 issue of the magazine. The new article highlights Southern Baptist disaster relief efforts after Hurricane Andrew in Florida; Baptist beginnings; the Southern Baptist Convention's 100-language ethnic diversity; and the mix of some 50 megachurches, such as Houston's Second Church, in a convention with a "backbone" of smaller churches averaging 286 resident members. The article also deals with Baptist local church and national governance and the conservative theological direction of the SBC after "a decade-long struggle... between conservative and moderate forces." *The Saturday Evening Post* commissioned James C. Hefley, writer-in-residence at Hannibal-LaGrange College, Missouri, to do the article, according to Mark Coppenger, SBC Executive Committee vice president for convention relations. The 1983 article was written by Wilmer C. Fields, then Executive Committee vice president for public relations.

Former Vietnam missionaries revisit church they nurtured

LAFAYETTE, La. (BP) — Herman Hays fought in Vietnam, and his wife Dottie fought right beside him. They arrived in South Vietnam in 1959, before large-scale U.S. involvement in that country. They left in 1975 just before Saigon fell to North Vietnamese troops.

Hays was not in the American army; he was in God's army. His battlefield was the streets of Saigon and other southern towns and cities. His weapon was the Bible, not an M-16 rifle.

The streets and jungles and rice paddies where American soldiers fought and died in the fight against communist forces are now in the hands of those forces, but the church where Southern Baptist work began in South Vietnam is stronger now than it was when Hays left in 1975.

The Hayses returned to celebrate Grace Baptist Church's 30th anniversary in November 1992. They were surprised by the church's success, even with strict guidelines imposed on religion by communist authorities.

Hays retired from Foreign Mission Board service in October 1991 with 33 years of service, but retirement does not mean inactivity.

The Hayses have been away from Vietnam 18 years, but in a sense they never really left. Hays

has been ministering to Vietnamese congregations for all but three of the past 34 years.

The Hays family — Herman, Dottie, and three small children — were the SBC's first missionaries to Vietnam, arriving a few months before another missionary couple.

Soon after the Hayses arrived, Bill and Audrey Roberson and Lewis and Toni Myers, both natives of Mississippi, joined the SBC mission work in South Vietnam. The Robersons are retired in North Carolina and Myers is vice president of the FMB's Cooperative Services International, working with countries where there are no Southern Baptist missionaries.

At one point, Grace's membership had dwindled from 150 to only a few faithful families. It was allowed to remain open for services because it met the strict criteria established by the government, including documentation of ownership of its property and a formally educated Vietnamese-born pastor.

That pastor is Le Quoc Chanh, who "gave his heart to the Lord the very first time an invitation was given in our very first service in the Vietnamese language," Hays said. "Chanh was the first Vietnamese won to the Lord and the first one baptized. He later felt the call to the ministry, went to seminary, and became the first Viet-

namese pastor of Grace Baptist Church."

Grace Baptist now has almost 600 members and is growing. Its goal this year is to win and baptize 400 Vietnamese to the Lord. Considering the ability and zeal of its pastor and the congregation, Hays said the church could reach that ambitious goal.

The church does not preach a watered-down version of the gospel, but there are restrictions imposed by the authorities, Hays recounted. One is that no non-Vietnamese citizen — including a Vietnamese native who left the country since 1975 and has returned — can proclaim or promote a religion.

"For that reason, the church could not invite me to preach," Hays said. "Chanh felt bad about that. I was able to lead the prayer of benediction in the church and make some brief remarks to thank the church for the gifts they gave us."

The work begun in Vietnam more than 30 years ago is bearing fruit not only in that country, but among Vietnamese around the world.

"One of the first converts of the work in Can Tho was Dang Minh Lanh," Hays said. "He is now the pastor of New Orleans Vietnamese Baptist Church in Gretna. It shows how a missionary work can come full circle."

Indian state experiencing continued revival despite religious strife

NAGALAND, India (EP) — Fires of revival were reported some 10 years ago among the Naga people in Nagaland, a state in northeastern India. Now, more than a decade later, not only is 85% of the Naga population Christian, but Naga church leaders report continued growth and enthusiasm among Christians.

"I have had the joy of teaching the Bible to overflowing churches at 5 a.m. every morning for two weeks at a stretch," said Imliimeren Ben Wati, a Naga and former director of the Evangelical Fellowship of India.

"Christianity impacts all levels of society in Nagaland," said Wati who has also been pastor of a 3,000 member church there. Wati said that in Nagaland newspapers

report how the Nagaland Baptist Church Council influences election campaigns, and the state radio broadcasts gospel music and reading of Scripture passages. Nagaland's chief minister (governor) is a Christian and "participates in church activities, gives money to the church, and occasionally preaches in churches on weekends."

Wati reported that more than 1,000 young people from Nagaland are currently studying in seminaries and Bible colleges. The Nagaland government provides scholarships even to theological students. Wati says the impact of the revival is being felt both in the churches and in society at large.

"People have hope," said Wati. Northeast India is an enclave of

seven states, including Nagaland, separated from the main body of the nation by Bangladesh. Geographically and politically, it is a sensitive region, with special government permission required to travel there. The region borders with Bhutan, Tibet, China, Burma, and Bangladesh. According to a World Evangelical Fellowship report, Naga Christians support missionaries in at least four foreign countries and several in other Indian states.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
copyright 1993

ZKUVUIYIW CKIWIHUI VKENN PURHIVV SI
FIHUWI SIR, KOS ZONN O PURHIVV ENVU FIHUWI
SQ HECKIW ZKOPK OV OR KIEYIR.

SECCKIZ CIR: CKOWCQ-CZU

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer will appear in this space next week.

Baptist Record

291 5-13
005-DTM
SOUTHERN BAPT HISTORICAL SO 00
901 COMMERCE ST SUITE 401
NASHVILLE TN 37203

May 13, 1993

Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205